

Report of the Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1909.

To the Midsomer Norton Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN.—I beg to present my report for the year 1909, together with the tables of statistics required by the Local Government Board and the Secretary of State.

Population.—The population of the district at the last census was 5,821, it is now estimated to the middle of the year at 6,328.

Geology.—The soil in the valleys is clay overlying conglomerate rock, on the high grounds redish loam overlying beds of lias. The land is chiefly pasture, and is well timbered. The water supply in the fields is derived from shallow wells, ponds, and streams, but many farms and fields are now supplied directly from the town mains.

Occupations.—Coal-mining, agriculture, manufacturing boots and shoes, and brewing.

Births.—The number of births registered during the year was 205—98 boys and 107 girls, giving a birthrate of 32.18 per 1,000 persons living in the district. The following table gives the number of births in each quarter of the year:—

	Males	Females	Total.
1st Quarter	26	32	58
2nd „	27	32	59
3rd „	25	26	51
4th „	20	17	37

98 107 205

Deaths.—The number of deaths registered during the year was 77—38 males and 39 females, giving a death rate of 12.03 per 1,000 persons living in the district. The following table gives the mortality in each quarter of the year:—

	Males	Females	Total.
1st Quarter	10	14	24
2nd „	9	12	21
3rd „	11	6	17
4th „	8	7	15

38 39 77

The following table gives the mortality in the various localities in the district:—

Midsomer Norton	49
Welton	10
Downside	5
Clandown	8
Clapton	2
Westfield	3

77

The following are the ages at which death occurred:—

Under 12 months	17
1 year and under 5 years ..	6
5 „ „ „ 15 „ ..	7
15 „ „ „ 25 „ ..	0
25 „ „ „ 65 „ ..	18
65 years and upwards	29

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There were 17 deaths under 12 months of age giving an infant mortality rate of 82.68.

The causes of death at all ages were:—

Acute Bronchitis .. 5	Rodent Ulcer .. 1
Chronic Bronchitis .. 5	Senile Decay .. 3
Inanition .. 3	Acute Gastritis .. 1
Valvular Heart Disease 8	Influenza .. 1
Meningitis .. 2	Acute Nephritis .. 1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage 6	Diphtheria .. 3
Premature Birth .. 6	Small Pox .. 1
Suicide .. 1	Diarrhœa .. 3
Diabetes .. 1	Rheumatic Fever .. 1
Carcinoma .. 6	Rickets .. 1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis .. 4	Syncope .. 1
Pneumonia .. 4	Chronic Otorrhœa .. 1
	Cancrum Oris .. 1

The causes of infant mortality were:—

Inanition .. 3	Suffocation (Inquest) 1
Premature Birth .. 6	Diarrhœa .. 2
Pneumonia .. 1	Meningitis .. 1
Acute Gastritis .. 1	Measles .. 2

The following deaths occurred from the Zymotic Diseases:—Measles 2, Small Pox 1, and Diphtheria 3. Giving a zymotic death rate of .93 per 1,000 inhabitants in the district.

Infectious Diseases. There were 112 cases of infectious disease notified in the district during the year:—Diphtheria 16, Small Pox 4, Erysipelas 4, Scarlet Fever 6, Chicken Pox 82.

After the outbreak of Small Pox in May, Chicken Pox was made notifiable for 12 months, and the following cases were notified in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Quarters of the year respectively, *i.e.*, 29, 48, and 5.

The outbreak of Small Pox originated at Redfield Road, and the infection was probably imported from the neighbourhood of Bristol. The

two cases were promptly isolated in wood huts in the field adjoining the Isolation Hospital, and precautions were taken to prevent further development of the disease. Subsequently two attendants contracted the disease, but in a mild or abortive form.

Sickness.—On September 24th, both the Day and Sunday Schools were closed at Clandown for three weeks owing to an epidemic of Measles, and as the disease still existed at the end of this period the closure was extended for a further 2 weeks.

Isolation Hospital.—The two semi-detached cottages situated on Welton Hill, used as a temporary Hospital, have been used for isolating 11 cases during the year. Arrangements have been made for the use of the Radstock ambulance for the removal of patients, and the old wheeled chair formerly used has been burnt.

There is no apparatus in the district for the disinfection of bedding or clothes.

Disinfection of Houses.—Formalin fumigation and spraying are used for living rooms, the Council have purchased a spray during the year which has been of great assistance. Tins of Carbolic Disinfectants are supplied to infected houses.

Water Supply.—The water supply is derived from three sources, *viz.*, 1 Radstock Town, 2 Downside College, and 3 Chilcompton Spring. The quantity is sufficient for the district. With regard to the quality of No. 3, it has been reported by the Council's Analyst to be satisfactory. A few houses use well water.

Slaughter-houses.—There are five licensed slaughter-houses in the district, these are inspected periodically, but apart from this no arrangements are made by the Council for the systematic inspection of meat in the district. There is no Inspector with a special certificate in meat inspection.*

Sewerage and Drainage.—Midsomer Norton and Clandown are to a large extent sewered, the sewage being treated at the respective works. In the outlying parts of the district earth closets and cess-pits are still in vogue.

Westfield and Norton Hill Terraces, with a population of at least 500, have recently been sewered, and connected with the Radstock Sewage Works. The closets in the districts are not fitted with flushing apparatus, and I would strongly urge the Council to enforce this regulation.

Housing of the Working Classes.—A number of new cottages have been built during the year on Norton Hill and on lands adjoining Radstock Road. With reference to the older houses, many back to back cottages remain, which have either insufficient or no through ventilation, the worst examples occur at Belle Vue, Welton. I would draw the Council's attention to the filthy state of the approaches in this part of Welton.

Removal of House Refuse.—This is not undertaken by the Council. The health of certain parts of the District would undoubtedly be benefited if this were removed periodically by the Sanitary Authority. The Council are contemplating the purchasing of a horse and cart during the ensuing year for this work; this I hope will be shortly carried out, for such a system as now exists should not be allowed to continue in a town with the population of Midsomer Norton.

Provision against Fire.—The Radstock Fire Brigade are under an agreement to attend fires with their engine; the Council possess hoses and other necessary appliances. There is no fire escape.

Dairies, Milkshops and Cowsheds.—These are inspected and a register kept.

Inspection of Dairy Cows.—No action has been undertaken by the Council in this district with reference to the examination of cows by a veterinary surgeon. On receiving instructions from the Local Government Board's Inspector, the whole of the dairies were inspected with reference to cow-pox, and a report forwarded to the Local Government Board. No action is taken regarding tuberculous cows.†

Factories and Workshops Act, 1901.—There are five Factories and 48 Workshops in the district. Inspection have been made with a view to meeting the requirements of the Act.

Appended are the tables of statistics.

* Questions asked by the Local Government Board.

† Questions asked by the Local Government Board.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ARTHUR BULLEID,

Medical Officer of Health.

January 29th, 1910.

**Midsomer Norton Urban
District Council.**

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1909.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM LEWIS & SON,
SOMERSET GUARDIAN OFFICE, RADSTOCK.

MIDSOMER NORTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of the Sanitary Inspector

For the Year ended DECEMBER 31st, 1909.

To the CHAIRMAN and MEMBERS of the COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to submit my third Annual Report dealing with the work of the Sanitary Department for the twelve months ended December 31st, 1909.

The district has been periodically inspected for the detection of Nuisances. Twenty-two intimation notices, dealing with nuisances on 44 premises, have been served, and were found sufficient to affect abatement.

Nuisances.

The bulk of the nuisances arose from choked water closets, consequent upon the closets not being regularly flushed, the provision of a flushing apparatus would minimise this and tend to greater cleanliness in this respect.

I again urge the consideration of additional Bye-laws for the provision of a flushing apparatus and water service to existing water closets, and as water closets are still being constructed to new houses without a flushing apparatus and water service as provided for by the Bye-laws, may I ask that the Bye-law may be enforced in all future building operations.

Sewerage.

With the exception of a stoppage in the Radstock Road Sewer, the sewerage system has been maintained in good working order. All the sewers with flat gradients have been regularly flushed. No repairs have been found necessary.

Sewer Extensions.

The Westfield districts has been sewered during the year, and the work of laying drainage systems for the Houses and connecting same to the new sewers has been commenced.

Sewerage Disposal Works.

The Welton Works have been satisfactorily maintained and managed. The filtering material in the filter beds has been washed during the year. The sludge has been removed periodically by the farmers in the neighbourhood of the works. Although it is not possible to keep the works quite clear, every effort is made to keep them as clear as possible from large accumulations of offensive sludge matter.

A good crop of mangolds has again been raised on the irrigation area, and also at Clandown. The question of enlarging this area has been considered and a further portion of land $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres in extent will be prepared for treating the effluent, and added to the present irrigation area during the next year.

The Clandown Works have also been satisfactorily maintained and managed. The filtering material in the filter beds has been washed during the year.

Drainage.

Defective house drains affecting 33 dwelling-houses have been overhauled and put into a better state, and the drainage systems of 18 new dwelling houses have been tested and approved; 17 of these were connected to the sewerage system, and one to a cesspool, there being no sewer available.

Drainage systems to five dwelling houses at Westfield have been laid and connected to the new sewerage system.

House Refuse Collection.

The question of removing the house refuse in the district is still in abeyance. The purchase of a horse and cart is contemplated in the coming year, when it is intended to make a commencement with this work.

Water Supply.

The water supply to the district from all three sources has been abundant. One of the Analyst's reports upon samples of water from all three sources contains the following:—"The bacteriological examination was satisfactory, in each case the bacillus coli communis not being present in either water in 10 c.c. These waters are all organically pure."

The quantity of water purchased during the year is:—

	Gallons.
From Downside College ..	8,870,000
From Radstock U.D.C. ..	5,555,000
Total ..	14,425,000
During 1908 ..	11,809,100

The quantity purchased by the Clutton Authorities during the year is:—1,552,280 gallons.

With one exception, all the new houses erected during the year have been supplied with water from the town supply.

Twenty-seven notices have been issued for the suppression of waste. There has again been a considerable quantity of water wasted through negligence, consequent on the large number of taps being fixed outside the houses, and one tap being common to many of the tenants thereof.

Swimming Bath.

The open air Swimming Bath has been fairly popular during the year, but the climatic conditions have been generally such as to be opposed to open air bathing. During the season 2,384 persons paid for admission.

Rainfall.

As registered at Downside Abbey for the year 1909, has amounted to 42.26 inches, being 7.66 above that of 1908, and 2.87 above the average for the last 20 years.

Infectious Disease.

Six cases of Scarlet Fever, four of Erysipelas, sixteen of Diphtheria, eighty-two of Chicken Pox, and four of Small Pox, were notified as occurring in the district. Of the four cases of Small Pox, two were of a mild form affecting attendants upon two bad cases isolated in temporary huts erected for the purpose on the Hospital Grounds. Three cases of Scarlet Fever and four cases of Diphtheria were treated at the Isolation Hospital.

All the rooms exposed to infection were disinfected by spraying and fumigation, principally with Formalin and Formalin Tablets, and in a few cases with Sulphur candles. Washing the rooms with carbolic fluid has also been done by the tenants of the houses.

There are no means of disinfecting clothes or bedding, except by leaving them exposed in the rooms to these agencies.

Slaughter-houses.

The five slaughterhouses have been regularly inspected and found in as clean a state as structural conditions allow.

Factories and Workshops.

There are 46 factories and workshops in the district. All have been inspected and found in fairly good and clean condition.

The bakehouses number seven. All have been inspected and found in a satisfactory state. One bakehouse has been structurally altered during the year, and put into a better state.

Milkshops, Dairies and Cowsheds.

The cowsheds and dairies have been inspected, and have been found in clean condition.

New Buildings and Alterations

Twenty-one plans were presented and approved for the erection of dwelling-houses, and nine for alterations and additions to existing property.

Seventeen houses have been inspected on completion for occupation.

Before closing my report I beg to thank the Council for the consideration shown and support afforded me during the past year.

I am, Gentlemen, yours obediently,

C. H. SUNDERLAND,

Assoc. R. San. Inst., Sanitary Inspector.

**Midsomer Norton Urban
District Council.**

**REPORT
OF THE
SANITARY INSPECTOR
For the Year 1909.**

PRINTED BY WILLIAM LEWIS & SON,
SOMERSET GUARDIAN OFFICE, RADSTOCK.